

KEEPING THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING

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Deuteronomy 6:1-9

1. Priorities matter because they define our lives.
2. Moses' priority was being God's man among God's people.
3. We see that reflected in how he dealt with what must have been his greatest disappointment in life.
 - a. Moses was God's instrument in delivering the Israelites from bondage in Egypt.
 - b. At this point he had put up with them and their rebellion and complaining for over forty years..
 - c. In a moment of anger and frustration he had failed to obey and honor God and lost the privilege of entering the Promised Land. Num 20:1-13

Then the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to the wilderness of Zin in the first month; and the people stayed at Kadesh. Now Miriam died there and was buried there. 2 There was no water for the congregation, and they assembled themselves against Moses and Aaron. 3 The people thus contended with Moses and spoke, saying, "If only we had perished when our brothers perished before the Lord! 4 "Why then have you brought the Lord's assembly into this wilderness, for us and our beasts to die here? 5 "Why have you made us come up from Egypt, to bring us in to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, nor is there water to drink." 6 Then Moses and Aaron came in from the presence of the assembly to the doorway of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to them; 7 and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 8 "Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink." 9 So Moses took the rod from before the Lord, **just as He had commanded him**; 10 and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?" 11 Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. 12 **But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."** 13 Those were the waters of Meribah, because the sons of Israel contended with the Lord, and He proved Himself holy among them.

- d. Recently God had told him that his life was to end soon. Num 27:12-14
Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go up to this mountain of Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the sons of Israel. 13 "When you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was; 14 for in the wilderness of

Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My command to treat Me as holy before their eyes at the water." (These are the waters of Meribah of Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.)

e. Moses' concern for the people led him to pray that God would appoint a new leader to replace him. Num 27:15-23

Then Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, 16 "May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, 17 who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord will not be like sheep which have no shepherd." 18 So the Lord said to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; 19 and have him stand before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and commission him in their sight. 20 "You shall put some of your authority on him, in order that all the congregation of the sons of Israel may obey him. 21 "Moreover, he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim before the Lord. At his command they shall go out and at his command they shall come in, both he and the sons of Israel with him, even all the congregation." 22 Moses did just as the Lord commanded him; and he took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. 23 Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, just as the Lord had spoken through Moses.

f. Finally, Moses prepared the people for his departure by reminding them of all they had been through and all that God expected of them.

g. Deuteronomy provides us a record of all that Moses taught the people just prior to his death.

h. Note what Moses emphasized in these few verses.

I. Obey God. 1-3

A. God commanded Moses to teach the people what He expected of them.

B. God's purpose behind Moses' teaching was that the people might do what God wanted them to do.

C. Additionally:

1. The present generation was to impact future generations.

2. Their obedience was to be a life-long obedience.

3. Their obedience would ensure God's blessings upon them and future generations.

II. Worship God. 4

A. The Israelites were prone to idolatry as many are today.

NOTE: I do not mean that we have idols in our homes, but many have idols in their hearts; things and people that take the place of, or come before, God.

B. Moses pointed out that Jehovah was God; the one and only God.

C. He expanded on this verse in Deuteronomy 6:10-15

"Then it shall come about when the Lord your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and

splendid cities which you did not build, 11 and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied, 12 then watch yourself, that you do not forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 13 **"You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name. 14 "You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you,** 15 for the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.

III. Love God. 5

A. Jesus quoted these verses 4-5 in answer to a question that was posed to Him.

Mark 12:28-34

One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" 29 Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; 30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' 31 'The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' **There is no other commandment greater than these.**" 32 The scribe said to Him, "Right, Teacher; You have truly stated that HE IS ONE, AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM; 33 AND TO LOVE HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH, AND TO LOVE ONE'S NEIGHBOR AS HIMSELF, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." 34 When Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that, no one would venture to ask Him any more questions.

B. Love for God is to be the master motivation in our lives, and those who love God will obey God. John 14:21-24

"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. **24 "He who does not love Me does not keep My words;** and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me."

IV. Love God's Word. 6-9

A. God's Word must be internalized. James 1:21

Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

B. God's Word is to be obeyed. James 1:22-25

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

C. Every avenue is to be used to teach and keep God's Word before us and others.

APPLICATION

1. What are the defining priorities in your life?
2. What is the defining priority in your life; who or what matter the most?
3. How would the people who know you best answer that question?
4. May God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit rule and reign in our lives.